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PROGRAM NBC Nightly News

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NBC Network

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SUBJECT U.S. and China Sharing Intelligence

JOHN CHANCELLOR: The United States and the Peoples Republic of China have been watching missile tests in the Soviet Union for the past year from two secret monitoring stations deep in China.

Under an arrangement reached during the Carter Administration, the monitoring equipment is American and the technicians are Chinese. The information is vital to both countries.

Until now, this information has been closely guarded, both in Washington and Peking. Our diplomatic correspondent Marvin Kalb has uncovered exclusive details about the arrangement.

MARVIN KALB: According to a secret and highly unusual arrangement, China and the United States have been sharing very sensitive intelligence for the past year on nuclear tests and missiles launches in the Soviet Union.

The intelligence comes from two listening posts equipped with sophisticated American technology and manned by Chinese specialists. This arrangement fills a vital gap in US intelligence, created in February, 1979, when fanatical followers of the Ayatollah Khomeini stormed to power in Iran and quickly shut down a CIA listening post in the northern part of the country, one key element in America's ability to monitor any strategic arms agreement with the Soviet Union.

Two months later, on April 17, five senators, Church, Javits, Sarbanes, Zorinsky, and Biden, met in Peking with Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping. Biden, desperately seeking some substitute for the Iranian monitoring station, proposed that Deng allow the US to set up a similar listening post in China.

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